AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

Please cancel Claim 21 without prejudice.

Please amend the claims as follows. Additions are underlined and deletions are shown in ~~strikeout~~ text.

1. (Currently Amended) A flexible coupling mechanism for coupling a chair member to a base member, the coupling mechanism comprising an elongate member having a first side and a second side and formed into a C-shaped spring having a flat, elongate top segment having a first end attached to the chair, a flat, elongate bottom segment having a second end attached to the base member, and a curved segment, said curved segment being located between said top and bottom segments and curving at least 180 degrees, said C-spring configured so that the first and second ends displace generally toward one another as the curved segment deflects, said elongate member including a central channel extending longitudinally along said first side from ~~a~~ the first end to ~~a~~ the second end, the channel having substantially the same cross sectional dimensions in the top, bottom and curved segments.

2. (Currently Amended) The flexible coupling mechanism of Claim 1, wherein said top segment first end includes a means for attachment to the chair member ~~a seat portion of a chair~~ and said bottom segment second end includes a means for attachment to the base member ~~a base portion~~ for providing the chair with a rocking motion.

3. (Currently Amended) The flexible coupling mechanism of Claim 1, wherein the elongate member is made of an aluminum alloy, and the portions of the C-shaped spring adjacent the central channel are about 30% thicker than the central channel.

4. (Currently Amended) A flexible coupling mechanism for coupling a chair member to a base member, the flexible coupling mechanism comprising an elongate member having first and second ends, one of the first and second ends being attached to the chair member and the other of the first and second ends being attached to the base member, said elongate member being formed into a C-shaped member to provide a top segment, a bottom segment and a curved segment, said top and bottom segments being substantially flat and parallel with the top segment generally above the bottom segment, the first and second ends being free to move relative to one another upon deflection of the curved segment, said C-shaped member having an inner surface and an outer surface, wherein a central channel extends longitudinally along said

outer surface to provide a contoured cross-sectional profile, the central channel having substantially the same depth throughout its length.

5. (Original) The flexible coupling mechanism of Claim 4, wherein said first and second ends of said elongate member are substantially adjacent each other in a spaced-apart relationship.

6. Cancelled.

7. (Original) The flexible coupling mechanism of Claim 4, wherein said elongate member is made of a non-ferrous material.

8. (Original) The flexible coupling mechanism of Claim 4, wherein said inner surface is substantially flat.

9. (Previously Presented) The flexible coupling mechanism of Claim 4, wherein said central channel provides a relatively thin center portion and thicker side portions, said center portion and said side portions extending between said first and second ends along a longitudinal axis of said coupling mechanism.

10. (Currently Amended) The flexible coupling mechanism of Claim 4 additionally comprising a mount component having a mount surface specially contoured to complement the contour of the C-shaped member outer surface in a direction transversely across the mount, wherein said outer surface mates with the mount component in a manner to resist rotational movement between said coupling mechanism and said mount component.

11. (Previously Presented) The flexible coupling mechanism of Claim 10, further comprising at least one hole extending through said first end of said elongate member, said hole adapted to receive a fastener for attachment with said component.

12. (Previously Presented) The flexible coupling mechanism of Claim 9, wherein said side portions are about 30% thicker than said center portion.

13. Cancelled.

14. Cancelled.

15. (Previously Presented) The coupling mechanism of Claim 12, wherein said elongate member is made of aluminum.

16. (Currently Amended) A coupling mechanism for coupling a chair to a base, the coupling mechanism adapted for providing a smooth deflection when subjected to a load so as to facilitate a rocking motion of the chair relative to the base, the coupling mechanism comprising:

at least two elongate members each having a substantially rectangular cross-section and first and second ends, one of the first and second ends being attached to the chair, the other of the first and second ends being attached to the base, each of said elongate members having an inner surface and an outer surface and each being formed with a channel extending longitudinally along said outer surface from the first end to the second end to create a thin center portion located between thicker side portions, each of said elongate members having an elongate, generally flat upper segment, an elongate, generally flat lower segment disposed generally below the upper segment, and a curved segment between the upper and lower segments, the curved segment curving at least 180 degrees and configured to flex when the first and second ends are moved relative to one another; and

a horizontal support coupled to said first ends of each of said elongate members.

17. (Currently Amended) The coupling mechanism of Claim 16, wherein said horizontal support has a pair of mount portions, each mount portion having a contoured surface adapted to complement said outer surfaces of said elongate members so that an elongate member complementarily fits ~~in~~ transversely across the mount portion.

18. (Currently Amended) The coupling mechanism of Claim ~~16~~17, further comprising a post extending downward from said horizontal support, said post adapted to be received by a cylindrical cavity for providing a swivel motion therebetween.

19. Cancelled.

20. (Currently Amended) A method of manufacturing a flexible coupling mechanism configured to resist lateral movement, comprising:

providing at least two generally flat, elongate spring members each having a first and second end and first and second generally opposing sides, a channel extending along the surface of the first side substantially from the first end to the second end, the channel having substantially the same depth from the first end to the second end;

bending each of the elongate members to create a substantially flat, elongate upper section, a substantially flat, elongate lower section, and a curved section between the upper and lower sections, the curved section being bent at least about 180°;

providing ~~a~~ an elongate connector comprising a pair of spaced apart mount surfaces, each mount surface being contoured so as to be complementary to the channel

of the corresponding elongate member in a direction generally transverse to the elongate connector;

attaching the lower sections of each bent elongate member to the connector so that the bent elongate members are spaced apart from one another and the channel of each elongate member complementarily engages the corresponding mount surface.

21. Cancelled.

22. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 21, wherein the elongate spring members have substantially the same cross-sectional profile along their entire length.

23. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 21 additionally comprising forming an elongate slot in the upper section of each of the bent elongate members, wherein the elongate slot is generally parallel to a longitudinal axis of the corresponding elongate member.

24. (Currently Amended) The flexible coupling mechanism of Claim 2, wherein the top segment means for attachment comprises ~~a~~an elongate slot.

25. (Previously Presented) The flexible coupling mechanism of Claim 3, wherein the elongate member has a substantially rectangular cross-section in the top, bottom and curved segments.

26. (Previously Presented) The coupling mechanism of Claim 17, wherein the mount portions are arranged on the horizontal support so that the elongate members are spaced from one another and generally parallel to one another, and wherein the outer surfaces of the elongate members engage the mount portions in a manner to resist relative movement in a direction generally transverse to the longitudinal axis of the elongate members.

27. (Currently Amended) The coupling mechanism of Claim 17, wherein the curved ~~section~~ segment curves about a substantially constant radius of curvature.

28. (Previously Presented) The coupling mechanism of Claim 27, wherein each of the elongate members have substantially the same cross-sectional profile from the first end to the second end.